

Week of July 22, 2002: Maine DOT Flash Facts

Topic: Work Zone Safety

Monday:

Summer means more people are on the roads and more road construction projects are underway.

- **Maine** experienced about 7300 Work Zone crashes over the past 10 years resulting in 27 fatalities and over 3400 injuries.
- ✓ Excessive speed and driver distraction are a factor in nearly 60% of all work zone crashes in Maine.
- ✓ Orange signs, cones, and barrels alert you to work zones. When you see ORANGE along the highway, think safety and be alert.
- ✓ Driving through a work zone requires caution, concentration and common sense.
- ✓ Watch the road and not the work. Expect the unexpected and maintain a safe following distance.
- ✓ Allow for extra travel time when planning your trip. (Construction delays are not unusual this time of year.)

Wednesday:

Grass cutting, tree trimming, and utility work along side the roads present dangers to those doing the work as well as those driving past these activities.

The majority of crashes in work zones involve drivers who are not paying attention to their driving and not watching the road ahead.

- **Nationally**, about 800 people are killed and 40,000 injured in Work Zone crashes each year.
- ✓ Drive at the posted Work Zone speed. The penalty for speeding in a work zone is often double the usual fine.
- ✓ Watch out for workers in work zones.
- ✓ Do not change lanes or pass in work zones.
- ✓ Unexpected stops are common in work zones. Leave plenty of room between your car and the one in front of you - at least a three second following distance (longer in poor weather or when visibility ahead is blocked.)

Friday:

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In 2001 alone, Maine had over 750 Work Zone crashes, 3 fatalities, and over 300 injuries. Drive safely.

- ✓ Slow down, pay attention and stay calm.
- ✓ Watch for Work Zone flaggers and follow their instructions.
- ✓ Obey signs and pavement markings as soon as you can-they will guide you through the work zone.
- ✓ At merges, move left or right as soon as possible. By moving over as soon as possible, you'll help smooth traffic flow through the work area.
- ✓ Pay attention to your driving task. Work Zones require your full attention.
- ✓ Watch for construction vehicles in work zones.
- ✓ Workers in work zones are vulnerable to serious injury.
- ✓ There are more injuries to drivers and passengers in work zones than to workers.